

LOW, FLAT LAND.

There was a man and his name was Brown,
And he lived about a mile and a half from
town;
And this here feller was awfully down
in the mouth, for his crap was liken for to
drown.

Beccos his 80 was low, flat land.
His very midriff it ached and pained
When he noticed how the weather rained and
rained;
And his dratted 80 it couldn't be drained.
And his corn was yellor, and the weeds they
gained,
And tadpoles threaten'd for to take that land.

If a cloud came up as big as a gourd,
Why, that was enuff, and it ripped and roared,
As if all the water that ever wuz stored
Since the days of Noah, had suddenly poured
On that miserable 80 of low, flat land.

The weather buro was all in a muss,
And insid of gittin better the wether got wuss;
And Brown 'lowed he'd raise nuthin' but puss-
ley, and he didn't do nothin' but cuss
And mope round the edge of that low, flat land.

But Missis Brown she usen for to smile,
And she said she thought it wasn't with while
For a human for to let the temper spile,
When Providence wanted to moisten the sile,
And drip a little water on that low, flat land.

And so, while Brown he poked and slumped,
His wife, she wasn't a partickel stump;
But into the weeds this woman she jumped,
And all summer long she fairly humped
Herself to make a crap on that low, flat land.

And when the corn-gatherin time came round,
Instid of the crap all gettin' drowned,
Thar wuz 60 to the aker on that low, flat ground;
And Brown said he reckoned as how he found
It wuz more in the woman than in the low,
flat land.

THE GATES OF HELL.

Mr. Talmage on the Wickedness of New York.

[From the New York Tribune.]

Mr. Talmage continued his series of sermons on the wickedness of New York, yesterday, before an audience that filled all the available space in the Brooklyn Tabernacle. In giving the announcement of the Friday evening lecture on the secular affairs of the week, he said that a great election was approaching, and he would leave no one in doubt as to whom he ought to vote for. The next text was taken from Matthew xvi, 18: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Mr. Talmage began his sermon as follows:

"It is only ten o'clock," said the officer of the law, as we got into the carriage for the midnight exploration. "It is only ten o'clock, and it is too early to see the places that we wish to see, for the theatres have not yet let out." I said to him: "What do you mean by that?" The officer replied: "The places of iniquity are not in full blast until the people have had time to arrive from the theatres." So we loitered on, and the officer told the driver to stop on a street where was one of the costliest gambling houses in the city of New York. All seemed dark. The blinds were drawn. All was guarded. But after the whispering of the officer to the guard at the door we were admitted into the hall and thence into the parlors. Around the table we found eight or ten men in middle life, well dressed. All the work was going on in silence, save the noise of the clattering of chips in one parlor and the revolving ball of the roulette table in the other parlor. Some of these men, we were told, had served terms in prison; some were shipwrecked bankers and brokers and money dealers, and some were going their first rounds of vice. But all were intent upon the table, as large or small fortunes moved up or down before them. Oh! there was something awful in the silence, the intense gaze, the suppressed emotion of the players. None looked up. They all had money on the table, and I have no doubt some saw, as they sat there, horses and carriages and lands and home and family rushing down into the vortex. Some of these men went in by a private key. Some went in upon a careful introduction. Some were taken in by the patrons of the establishment. The officer of the law said to me, "No one gets in here except by police mandate or by letter from a patron." While we were there a young man came in, put his money down on the roulette table and lost. Put more money down on the table. Lost. Put more money down on the roulette table and lost. Then, feeling in his pockets for more money and finding none, in severe silence he turned his back upon the scene and passed out.

All the reports of the glitter and the costly magnificence of such places are untrue. Men kept their hats on and smoked, and there was nothing in the upholstery to forbid. While we stood there, men lost their property and lost their souls. Merciless place! Not once in all the years of that gambling-house has there been one word of sympathy uttered for the losers of the game. In the gambling-houses of our cities men have their property wrung from them, and then they go out, some to drown their sorrows in drink, others to ply the forger's pen, others to resort to the suicide's revolver. Every day in Christen-

dom \$18,000,000 of money passes from hand to hand through gambling practices; and every year in Christendom \$123,000,000,000 changes hands through gambling processes.

"But," I said, "it is eleven o'clock, we must be off." The burly guards slamming the door after us, we rolled on towards the gates of hell. My friends, it is always safe to go where God calls you to go, and God has told me to go through these gates of hell and explore and report. Taking three of the high official authorities and two of the elders of my church, I went in. I am here this morning to sketch the gates of hell. I shall tell you of both sides, and I shall tell you what those gates are made of. With the hammer of God's truth I shall flash light upon the shining hinges.

Gate the first. Impure literature. Anthony Comstock seized twenty tons of bad books, plates and letter-press. When Professor Cochran, of the Polytechnic Institute, poured the destructive acids on those places they smoked in righteous annihilation. And yet a great deal of bad literature of the day is not gripped of the law. It is strewn in your parlors. It is in your libraries. Some of your children read it at night after you have retired. Much of this literature is under the title of scientific information. A book agent with one of these infernal books, glossed with scientific nomenclature, went into a hotel and sold in one day one hundred copies, and sold them all to women. It is appalling that men and women who can get from the family physician all the useful information they may need, and without any condemnation, should wade in such cursed literature under the plea of getting useful knowledge. Then there is all the novelette literature of the day. As there are good novels that are long, so there may be good novels that are short. But there is an exception. No one systematically reads the average novelettes of this day and keeps either integrity or virtue. The most of these novelettes are written by broken-down literary men for small compensation, on the principle that having failed in literature elevated and pure, they hope to succeed in the tainted and the nasty. Oh! this is a wide gate of hell, and every panel is made up of a bad book or newspaper.

Gate the second. The dissolute dance. You shall not refer me to the general subject of dancing, whatever you may think. I am not discussing that question. It is seen not only in the haunts of death, but in the elegant mansion. You know, my friends, what postures and attitudes and figures are suggestive of the devil. They who glide into the dissolute dance glide over an inclined plane, and the dance is swifter and swifter, and wilder and wilder, until with the speed of lightning they whirl off the edges of the decent life into a fiery future. This gate of hell is so wide that it swings across the Administration of many a fine parlor and across the ball-room of the summer watering-place. You have no right my brother, my sister, you have no right to take attitudes to the sound of music which would be unbecoming in the absence of music. No piano of city parlor, or fiddle of mountain picnic, can consecrate that which God hath cursed.

Gate the third. Indiscreet apparel. The attire of women for the last four or five centuries has been beautiful and graceful beyond anything I have known. But there are those who will always carry that which is right into the extraordinary and the indiscreet. I am told that there is a fashion about to come in upon us from Paris which is shocking to all righteousness. I charge Christian women neither by style of dress nor adjustment of apparel to become administrative of evil. Perhaps no one else will dare to tell you - so I will tell you - that there are multitudes of men who owe their eternal damnation to the boldness of womanly attire. [Applause.] Show me the fashion plate of any age between this and the time of Louis XVI of France and Henry VIII of England, and I will tell you the type of morals or immorals. A modest apparel means a modest people.

Gate the fourth. Alcoholic beverages. In all our midnight exploration we saw that all the scenes of wickedness were under the enchantment of the wine cup. That was what the waitresses carried on the platter. That was what glowed on the table. That was what shone in the illuminated gardens. That was what flushed the cheeks of the patrons who came in. That was what staggered the steps of the patrons as they went out. Nearly all the men who go

into the assemblies of death go in intoxicated. Tell me that a young man drinks, and I know the whole story. If he becomes a captive of the wine-cup, he will become a captive of all other vices, only give him time. The officers of the law told me that these people escape the legal penalty because they are all licensed to sell liquor. Then I said within myself, The courts that license the sale of strong drink license gambling houses, license libertinism, license disease, license death, license all suffering, all crime, all despoliation, all disasters, all murders, all woe. It is the court and the legislature that is leaving wide open this crowning stupendous death of the lost.

I am greatly obliged to these gentlemen of the press, who have fairly reported what I have said. I say to the press of this city, of New York and other prominent cities, I thank you for the almost universal fairness with which you have presented what I have had to say. I thank also those who have by letters shared in this work. Letters coming from all parts of the land, from Christian reformers, telling me to go on with what I have undertaken. Perhaps about one out of a hundred is condemnatory; as, for instance, one I got yesterday from a man who said he thought my sermons would do great damage, as they would cause a great deal of suspicion as to where the head of the family was spending his evenings. I was sorry it was an anonymous letter, as I should have written immediately to that man's wife, telling her to put a detective on that man's track, for I knew right away that he was going to bad places.

Influence of Newspapers.

A school teacher, who had been engaged a long time in the profession, and witnessed the influence of newspapers upon the minds of family and children, writes as follows:

I have found it to be a universal fact, without exception, that the scholars of both sexes and all ages, who have access to newspapers at home, when compared with those who have not, are:

1. Better readers, excellent in pronunciation, and consequently read more understandingly.
2. They are better spellers, and define words with ease and accuracy.
3. They obtain practical knowledge of geography in about half the time it requires of others, as the newspapers have made them acquainted with the location of important places, of nations, their government and doings, on the globe.
4. They are better grammarians, for having become so familiar with every variety of style in the newspaper, from the commonplace advertisement to the finished classical oration of the statesman, they more readily comprehend the meaning of the text, and consequently analyze its construction with accuracy.
5. Those young men who have for years been readers of newspapers are always taking the lead in debating societies, exhibiting a more expressive knowledge, a greater variety of subjects, and expressing their views with greater fluency, clearness and correctness.

Nothing New.

The Black Hills are not by any means the mining fields that they are supposed to be. Evidences have been discovered that years ago the whole country was prospected and mining carried on by a party who never regained the outer world to tell the story of their luck. Through the Whitewood district are found hewed pine logs, thirty feet in length, overgrown by pines and saplings, showing by the shot and bullets that penetrated some of these timbers, that a fight ensued, and the probability is that the party were massacred. Then sluice boxes are found, buried from six to eight feet under the earth, showing, by stages of decay, that twenty or thirty years have elapsed since they were built, and that rains and storms have buried them beneath the earth's surface. At Golden run there is a mine of rich ore, into which a run had been cut many years ago. The timbers in the cut show marks of a terrible siege, and undoubtedly with the Indians assailing the miners while at work. The timbers show many years' standing, and in several places they are perforated with shot and bullets. These, and many other such indications, prove conclusively that Deadwood and vicinity is really an old mining camp.

—From September 1st to November 8th Waco shipped 20,537 bales of cotton. During the same time Dallas has received 14,579 bales.

DIVORCE.

The Difference Between Old Times and New.

[From the Albany (N. Y.) Law Review.]

Divorce existed in all ages at Rome, and was always a private act. For a long time it was not abused by the Romans, but toward the latter part of the republic and under the empire divorces became very common. Seneca notices a remarkable instance of a Roman matron who is said to have gone the rounds of eight husbands in five years. Pompey divorced his wife Mucia. Cicero speaks of Paula Valeria as being ready to serve her husband with notice of divorce on his return from his province. Cicero himself divorced his wife Terentia, after living with her thirty years. The husband generally took the keys from his wife, put her out of his house, gave her back her dowry, and so dissolved the marriage. This might be done in the wife's absence. Cicero divorced his wife Terentia by letter. The laws in the several Grecian States regarding divorce were different, and in some of them men were allowed to put away their wives on slight occasions. Among the Athenians, either husband or wife might take the first step. The wife might leave the husband or the husband might dismiss the wife. The Spartans seldom divorce their wives. The Ephori fined Lysander for repudiating his wife. An Arab may divorce his wife on the slightest occasion. So easy and so common is the practice, that Burekhardt assures us that he has seen Arabs not more than forty-five years of age who were known to have had fifty wives, yet they rarely have more than one at a time. By the Mohammedan law a man may divorce his wife orally, and without any ceremony; he pays her a portion, generally one-third of his dowry. He may divorce her twice and take her again without her consent, but if he put her away by a triple divorce, conveyed in the same sentence, he can not receive her again until she has been married and divorced by another husband. By the Jewish law it appears that a wife could not divorce her husband, but under the Mohammedan code, for cruelty and some other causes, she may divorce him. Among the Hindoos, and also among the Chinese, a husband may divorce his wife upon the slightest ground, or even without assigning any reason. She is under the absolute control of her husband. The law of France, before the revolution, following the judgment of the Catholic church, held marriage to be indissoluble; but during the early revolutionary period divorce was permitted at the pleasure of the parties when incompatibility of temper was alleged. The Code Napoleon restricted this liberty. On the restoration of the Bourbons a law was promulgated, 8th of May, 1816, declaring divorce to be abolished; that all suits then pending for divorce, for definite cause, should be for separation only, and that all steps then taken for divorce by mutual consent should be void, and such is now the law in France. The power of the courts to grant limited divorces is well settled in this country. Cruel and inhuman treatment and abandonment are frequent grounds of action. Austerity of temper, sallies of passion, abusive language, and mere indignities to the moral character or reputation of his wife, vulgar or harsh language, with such epithets that deeply wound the feelings and excite the passions without any menace indicating violence to the person, do not afford sufficient grounds of divorce. If a wife renders her husband's "condition intolerable and his life burden-some," or if her conduct is so violent and outrageous as to render the proper discharge of the duties of married life impossible, it is a good ground of separation from her. Such abuse or indignities offered by the wife to the husband would not justify him in turning her out of doors; he must show such cruel or barbarous treatment or danger of his life as would entitle him to a divorce. Desertion or abandonment by either husband or wife is one ground for divorce, but the desertion or abandonment must be intentional, or willful and malicious, with an intent to renounce and disregard the marriage relation. The refusal of a wife to remove with her husband to a foreign country is not a willful desertion. If a husband should go away and live apart from his wife, it is not considered a desertion within the meaning of the statutes of New Jersey. The failure to supply the wife with such necessities and comforts as are within the husband's circumstances, and thus by cruelty compelling her to quit him, amounts to actual abandonment and desertion.

"Heat is Life."

There is no greater fallacy than the opinion of many, particularly the young and strong and vigorous, that winter—especially a sharp, frosty one, with plenty of snow—is the most healthy season of the year. Very few persons seem to realize the fact that cold is the condition of death, and that in both warm and cold climates it is our unconscious effort to maintain our bodily heat at a temperature of ninety-eight degrees that wears us out. To this temperature called "blood-heat," every cubic inch of oxygen that serves to vitalize our blood must be raised by our own bodily heat, or life ceases. Since in cold weather the maintenance of a sufficiently elevated bodily temperature becomes very often a difficulty too great for our strength, the advent of a severe winter is really more to be dreaded than a visitation of a pestilence. The saying, "Heat is life—cold is death," has a striking illustration and confirmation in the reports now regularly submitted by Dr. Russell to the Glasgow sanitary committee. The death rate rises and falls with the regularity of the thermometer. So many degrees less heat, so many more deaths and vice versa. In one of his fortnightly reports Dr. Russell says: "The death rate in the first week of the fortnight was twenty-one, and in the second week twenty-five. The mean temperature in the former week was 40.8 degrees Fahrenheit, in the latter 39.5." He attributes the low rate of the first week to the high mean temperature of the preceding fortnight, which was 47.83 degrees, and adds: "This is a good illustration of a law which we frequently observe in these reports of temperature and death rates—that a week of low temperature produces a high death rate in the week following." In our climate it would probably be difficult to find a more frequent cause of serious ailments than taking cold. Whatever weak place we have, whatever constitutional disorder we be subject to, cold will surely discover. We take colds because our vitality is too low to ward off the effects of the reduced temperature around us. As a matter of first importance, then, to resist cold and the various derangements of the system consequent, it is necessary by proper nutrition to maintain our natural animal heat; second, to retain this heat by a sufficient quantity of clothing; third, to regulate with care the temperature of the air we breathe.

Postal Savings Bank.

The postal savings banks were introduced to afford the poorer classes in England a safe means of investing small sums of money. They are limited to \$150, and reach as low as a shilling. * The depositor can incur no loss, as in the common savings bank. * He is allowed two and one-half per cent. interest, and can withdraw his deposit without any fear of being driven to a thirty or sixty days' notice. His money is always ready for him; and by a very useful provision, if he travels to a distant city, he can call at any postal bank and draw what sums he pleases. A depositor in New York, for example, might go to San Francisco and obtain at its post-office the money he had left at home. The banks are usually managed by women. Female clerks, evidently well acquainted with their business, receive the money of the depositors, answer inquiries, are well educated, and make useful financiers; and the small amount of loss attending the system shows that in honesty and intelligence they are not, at least, surpassed by the sterner sex. * The postal savings bank was introduced in 1861, and has since risen to unexampled prosperity. The amount deposited since that year has reached \$450,000,000; the amount remaining on deposit is about \$135,000,000—a small sum compared to the vast returns of our own banks, but divided among more than 3,000,000 depositors. The average deposit is less than \$20—a plain proof that the banks afford accommodation to that class for which they are especially designed. * The postal banks have made their way into various countries, but have as yet been often narrow in their plan. In France, under the old system, deposits are limited to \$200; in Belgium, to \$600; in Denmark, there is no limit. Prussia rises to \$750, Austria to \$6,000. Italy has adopted the postal banks with great success; in Germany the system has been partially employed; in Austria completely. France has introduced some of its features. In all civilized countries it is making its way. In no country, it would seem, should it be more cordially received than in ours, since its leading idea is that the people should lend their savings to themselves, and enforce upon their government the strictest rules of financial integrity.—Harper's Weekly.